

MAYOR'S ANNUAL ADDRESS 2010

Honored Guests, Colleagues, and Residents, welcome. A new decade has come upon us and with it comes new opportunities.

Returning to the Governing Body, Councilman Mike Yakubov – welcome back. You have earned the respect and support of your constituents and in turn, they have given you again the privilege to serve them. You worked hard over the last three years, here and in the neighborhoods of the 5th ward. Congratulations.

To our newest member, Councilman Joe Accardi, you are no stranger to the community, its volunteerism, and its governments that serve the people. Your experience as a Board of Education member will undoubtedly continue the fine relationship between the two bodies, just as your predecessors Matarante and Harms did in the past. I look forward to working with you in your new capacity as Councilman – Welcome aboard.

For members of the Governing Body, Councilman Dinardo, Councilwoman Chen-Hoerning, Councilman Miranda and Councilman Hokanson, I can honestly say 2009 was the most difficult and challenging year for our Borough. With a depressed global economy, the uncertainty of our nation and state, rising costs and ever growing mandates, our job was most difficult. Add to our plight – an Affordable Housing Law Suit we all knew as the Romerovski and Avalon Bay lawsuit, and this could have been a year of political disaster and more harm to our community.

However, I can honestly say we addressed these issues head on, allowed each person's opinion, whether resident or elected official be heard. It was the best Council to address the toughest issues that I have every experienced in my two decades of elected service. I commend each one of you and thank you for putting our Borough's interest first.

Another special thank you to the volunteers, our Fire Department, First Aid Squad, Recreation and Library. Our volunteer organizations are abundant and second to none.

Another year and another opportunity to convey my gratitude to all of our municipal employees. Sometimes, I do not know how you do it without losing your cool or throwing in your towels, but day in and day out you do so....so my heartfelt thanks. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart.

We have a multi-million dollar property – the Sullivan Chevrolet property – as a just start to our downtown. Between legislative and financial means, those traditional and unconventional, we can see to it that the property can once again be a gem of our downtown. And with the current discussion with Union County Government, in particular Freeholder Mirabella and his staff, new options are available. The Council and I will be working hard to work through options that will hopefully bring about change to our downtown.

Along with the suggestion of my colleagues here, I have requested the Tax Assessor to begin the Reevaluation process. It will be costly, but must be done. Residents of Roselle Park – Reevaluation is upon us.....20% assessed to the Market value.

We have signed a contract with Conrail to acquire property with Domus Corporation (Catholic Charities) which will be coming before the Governing Body, the prospective developer of senior citizen initiative.

At the Casano Center, the mammoth grill and teak wood furniture is turning into a respectable oasis for senior citizens, individuals and children alike.

At public meetings, there will be a five minute limit. A close advisor once told him that less said is sometimes the best said.

Let us not forget what is happening in our world today. Terrorism still is unfortunately alive and well as we were recently reminded. Thus we are again reminded about women and men serving in our armed forces, especially those from Roselle Park. May God watch over them and protect them from harm. We hope for their safe return home.

We have 357 days to accomplish many of these goals and we cannot start a moment too soon. So let us not belabor the issues ahead...today's words will convert to actions...actions that I can honestly say I am glad we have this particular team of elected official working on, all for the betterment of our Borough.

So, may God provide the wisdom to carry out our tasks ahead and being a new decade of governance for our fine Borough. Thank you and God Bless You.